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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 CHENGDU 000006

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/6/2035

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SUBJECT: WIFE OF SICHUAN DISSIDENT HUANG QI DISCUSSES HIS CASE

REF: A) CHENGDU 99; B) CHENGDU 141; C) CHENGDU 182; D) BEIJING 402

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CLASSIFIED BY: David E. Brown, Consul General, U.S. Consulate
General Chengdu.

REASON: 1.4 (d)

11. (C) Summary: Zeng Li, wife of imprisoned Sichuan dissident Huang Qi, told Consul General January 4th that she has not been allowed to see her husband since he was sentenced on November 23, 2009 to three years imprisonment for possession of state secrets. Zeng fears for Huang's health -- she is not allowed to send in medicine for an old head injury incurred during his previous imprisonment and he has one lump/tumor (rouliu) on his left chest, and two on his abdomen. The "secrets" possessed were documents on how to stop local peasants from appealing for redress to higher levels, which local government officials had put online, apparently by mistake. Zeng said Huang's post-quake work to help parents whose children had been killed by shoddy school construction, not the possession of the "secret" documents, was the real reason for Huang's prosecution.

12. (C) Huang was arrested at the behest of former Sichuan Province Party Secretary, and now CCP Central Committee Political and Law Committee Chairman and Politburo Member, Zhou Yongkang for helping bereaved parents protest the deaths of their children. Zeng discussed egregious violations of PRC court procedures during the trial and sentencing of Huang, and then sketched Huang Qi's career from helping a Chengdu mother whose daughter died following Chengdu's June 4, 1989 demonstrations, to working with police to help trafficked women and children, to becoming a target of police investigations for helping peasants seek redress after their land had been seized in collusion of local officials. Zeng said that she and her son, both of whom have passports, wish to go to the United States, where her 18-year-old son hopes to attend college. End Summary.

13. (C) On January 4, Consul General picked up Zeng in his car and brought her inside the U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu so that she could not be stopped at the gate by Chinese police, had she entered as a pedestrian. CG opened by: telling Zeng of the US government's concern for human rights cases like Huang Qi's; provided her with a Chinese translation of Secretary Clinton's December 14, 2009 speech "U.S. Human Rights Agenda for 21st Century;" and expressed the personal hope that, at some point in the future, Chinese citizens would recognize Huang Qi as a hero.

Huang Qi Convicted August 5, Sentenced Nov 23 For Quake Activism

14. (C) Zeng Li then explained that her husband had been convicted on November 23, 2009, ostensibly for "illegal possession of documents that are state secrets," an offense he had ostensibly committed two years before. The offense was connected to the posting of two documents on Huang's website, 64tianwang.com, and the presence of a third document on Huang Qi's computer hard drive. Chinese local government officials had previously put the documents online, apparently by mistake, and Huang Qi had reposted them. The three documents discussed how local governments should prevent local peasants from carrying their petitions for redress to higher levels including Beijing.

15. (C) Zeng said that, contrary to official claims (ref D), his support for parent petitioners who lost children in shoddily built schools that collapsed in the May 12, 2008 earthquake was the real reason for Zeng's prosecution. From May 13, 2008 until his arrest on June 10, 2008, Huang made 14 trips to the earthquake zone to bring aid that he had collected from donations. Zeng believes that the Chinese government arrested Huang due to his earthquake-related criticism because:

-- Huang Qi told his Beijing-based human rights lawyer, Mo Shaoping, that he was intensively interrogated about his post-quake activities during the first half month after his arrest. During this period, his interrogators never raised the issue of "secret documents."

-- Mo Shaoping also told her that the director of the Chengdu Detention Center (Anjing Township, Pi County) had told him when he asked to see his client that, "No, you may not. I have a written order forbidding any visitors for the prisoner signed by Zhou Yongkang, Chairman of the CCP Political and Legal Committee" [Zhengfa Weiyuanhui]. The lawyer was also told that Zhou Yongkang had ordered Huang first taken into custody and

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then the details worked out later ("xianzhan houzou"). Zhou had visited Chengdu just two days before Huang's arrest.

PRC Legal Procedures Repeatedly Violated at Trial and Sentencing

16. (C) Zeng said that Huang Qi's trial was originally scheduled for February 2009, but was delayed when the lawyer protested that he had been notified one afternoon for trial the next morning, a violation of PRC legal procedure. At Huang Qi's August 5 trial, only Zeng and her son attended from among Huang's family and many supporters. The courtroom was packed beforehand with police and other government workers in order to keep the general public out. Zeng explained that Huang was defended by the two lawyers, Mo Shaoping and Ding Xikui, who also defended Liu Xiaobo and other Chinese Democratic Party and rights protection movement activists. Zeng said that, during Huang's trial, the prosecutor could say whatever he wanted, and even interrupt the judge, but that the defense lawyers were constantly interrupted. The family asked permission for Huang Qi's father, who had late-stage lung cancer, to see him in the detention center where Huang Qi has been held since his arrest on June 3, 2008. Permission was refused, and the father died last August.

17. (C) At the November 23 sentencing hearing, the verdict was read out, but with no specific reference to the evidence, just

unnamed "secret documents." Huang Qi's lawyers were not able to attend because of the short notice before the hearing. Huang Qi was not given a chance to speak. The judge did not ask him, as PRC regulations require, whether he wished to appeal the sentence. As the judge said "Take him away", Zeng spoke up, yelling "Huang Qi wants to appeal," the judge told her to keep quiet, then Huang Qi shouted "I have a right to speak. I want to appeal. You didn't give me a chance to speak." On November 26, Huang Qi's lawyers called the judges at the court to say that Huang Qi would appeal. The judges kept hanging up whenever they heard Huang Qi's name. Finally, the lawyer called another judge on the court not involved in the case and said "This is an official communication from a legal counsel. Huang Qi appeals." The appeal was accepted, although Zeng does not expect Huang's sentence to change. Zeng did not receive a copy of the verdict. Zeng says she is in regular contact with foreign media to try to maintain international interest in Huang Qi's case.

Wife Fears for Huang Qi's Health

18. (C) Zeng said that the detention center refuses to accept the medicine Huang had been taking daily for his the severe head injury he had suffered as a result of beatings during his first imprisonment during 2000 - 2005. As a result of that trauma, his memory has been severely affected, Zeng said. Huang has been sleeping extremely poorly, as little as two hours a night, and has been suffering health palpitations, likely due to stress and exhaustion. She said he also has two tumors growing on his chest. Zeng said that according to PRC regulations she would not be allowed to see him until at least six weeks after his sentence is final. The lawyer told her that the Detention Center was unheated and had a concrete floor. Prisoners sleep on shelves built into the wall.

Four Tales From Huang Qi's Long Activist Career

1I. Aid to Petitioner re June 4, 1989 Detention Death

19. (C) Zeng told Consul General four stories drawn from Huang Qi's long activist career.

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110. (SBU) Huang Qi supported the petitions to the authorities by the mother of a 16-year old girl who had been killed in prison immediately after Chengdu's large demonstrations of June 4, 1989 (the same day as the Tiananmen protests in Beijing). Later in the 1990s, Huang worked closely with police to help trafficked women and children and sometimes took on difficult cases that had frustrated and embarrassed the police.

II. Rescuing Women Trafficked to
Sichuan Party Secretary's Hometown

¶11. (SBU) For example, Huang persuaded the Sichuan Provincial Public Security Bureau (PSB) to send six armed officers to the county seat of Renshou County, where six peasant girls had been gone after accepting a false job offer by a restaurateur who turned out to be a whorehouse operator. The girls were raped on the first night and forced into slavery, except for a seventh girl who jumped from a balcony and escaped. The father of one of the girls appealed to the Chengdu police who said that they could not help because the case was outside of their geographic jurisdiction. After leaving, the father noticed Huang Qi's office sign, which was in the same building as a Chengdu City Public Security office. Since Renshou County had a reputation for gangster ties to local government, six armed officers from Sichuan PSB accompanied Huang Qi, the father, the escaped girl, and a reporter from the Sichuan Public Security's internal-distribution-only periodical, "Jingyan." When they arrived at the scene, they were told that the girls had gone to another county, and reminded that this was the home county of the then Sichuan Province Party Secretary, Zhou Yongkang. Not believing that the girls had left, the public security officer insisted that the girls be handed over and, in the end, the girls were surrendered to the provincial public security officers. County public security and county officials were among the "clients" of the girls who had been forced into prostitution.

III. PM Zhu Rongji Hears of Theft of Peasant Salaries Through Internal Media

¶12. (SBU) Huang Qi also publicized cases he heard of involving the deduction, in the form of various "miscellaneous fees," of about one quarter of the salaries of Sichuan peasants sent overseas for two years to work by the then Sichuan Province Labor Export Office. Chinese television journalists came to report the story for a famed evening magazine show "Jiaodian Fangtan," but were forbidden to broadcast the story. However, in the end a Chinese journalist did write up the story in a government internal-distribution-only news report, which caught the attention of then Prime Minister Zhu Rongji. After Zhu ordered the problem fixed and measures taken so that it never happen again in China, Huang Qi was visited in his office by Pu Lieping of the Sichuan branch of the State Security Office (Guo'an ting). Pu abused Huang verbally and physically, waved a letter, and said Zhu Rongji had heard of this, and if you do this again, we will get you.

IV. Website, Focus on Human Rights Led to Subversion Conviction

¶13. (SBU) In the years before running afoul again of Chinese judicial authorities, Huang Qi's website, 64-tianwang.com, at first publicized mostly cases of families looking for disappeared women and human rights issues. The name of the website comes from the date of its founding, June 4, 1999 an oblique reference to the taboo topic of Tiananmen. The website won praise from the Chinese media for its work on trafficking. However, Huang Qi's help to the plight of the weaker members of society, including peasants seeking redress after losing their land, alarmed government and party officials. Huang Qi moved

the server to the United States to put it out of the reach of Chinese authorities. The BBS on the website became a forum for many activists including the China Democratic Party, Tiananmen veterans like Wang Dan, and Uighur activist Rebiya Kadeer. Huang Qi was arrested on June 3, 2000, held for many months in violation of PRC legal procedures, and indicted for incitement to splitting the country and incitement to overthrow state power. The splittism charge was dropped but he was convicted on the subversion charge, sentenced to five years in jail, and released in 2005.

Huang Qi's Son Hopes to Study in the U.S.

¶13. (SBU) Zeng said harassment of landlords had forced her to move constantly. She now lives with a cousin in Chengdu. Her son's education was disrupted by his father's situation and he had few friends. The son was denied his right under Chinese law for a free public education and so went to a private elementary and middle school run by a Taiwanese. Later he went to high school in Neijiang, located halfway between Chengdu and Chongqing, where her parents live. The son, 18, is now a first-year student at a commercial college in Chengdu. The family cannot afford to pay for a U.S. education, but hope he could win a scholarship. Several months ago, both mother and son successfully applied for PRC passports for the purpose of personal travel.

¶14. (SBU) Consul General suggested that Huang Qi's son visit the PAS library to investigate U.S. schools and consider applying this summer, and arranged for PAO to provide him with student advisory services.

¶15. (SBU) Reference: Links to many articles on Huang Qi are available in the English and Chinese language versions of the Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) article "Huang Qi".

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